

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 16205 01 OF 02 161711Z

42

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ISO-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 ACDA-19 IO-14 AID-20

DPW-01 SY-10 OPR-02 EB-11 AGR-20 SNM-02 COME-00 SSC-01

CU-04 OC-06 CCO-00 A-01 OMB-01 DRC-01 /225 W

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O P 161335Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 7464

INFO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

AMCONSUL UDORN

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

DIA

DEA HQS

USSAG NKP

13TH ADVON UDORN

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 BANGKOK 16205

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS

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PAGE 02 BANGKO 16205 01 OF 02 161711Z

TAGS: PGOV, PINR, TH

SUBJ: THE NEW ROYAL THAI GOVERNMENT CABINET

REF: FBIS BANGKOK D160648Z OCT 73

PRIME MINISTER SANYA THAMMASAK ANNOUNCED HIS NEW CABINET (SEE REFERENCE) SHORTLY AFTER 1300 OCTOBER 16. FOLLOWING ARE BRIEF BIOGRAPHIC SKETCHES AND COMMENTS ON THE MINISTERS: PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE: (REPORT ON PRIMIN SANYA REPORTED SEPTTEL.)

1. SUKICH NIMMANHAEMIN IS THE NEW DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, LT. GEN. SAWAENG SENANARONG CONTINUES IN HIS FORMER POSITION UNDER THANOM AS MINISTER ATTACHED TO THE OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER. SUKICH IS A RESPECTED ELDER STATESMAN WHO WAS THAI AMBASSADOR TO INDIA, AND THEN TO WASHINGTON BEGINNING IN 1963. BEFORE THAT HE HAD BEEN DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND ECONOMIC MINISTER IN 1958. HE LATER PUT IN A DISAPPOINTING PERFORMANCE AS EDUCATION MINISTER. HE HAS BEEN RETIRED FOR SOME YEARS BUT FOR THE LAST YEAR HAS BEEN WORKING ON A "UNIVERSITY OF THE AIR" ADULT EDUCATION RADIO PROGRAM. SANYA RESPECTS HIM AS AN ELDER STATESMAN AND AS AN "AJARN" OR PROFESSOR. SAWAENG HAS SANYA'S DEEP PERSONAL RESPECT, BUT IS NOT KNOWN FOR THE FRESHNESS OR PRECISION OF HIS IDEAS.

2. MINISTRY OF DEFENSE. ACM DAWEE CHULLASAPYA IS APPOINTED DEFENSE MINISTER, AND ADM. THAWIL RAYANONOND AND GEN. SURAKIJ MAYALARP ARE THE DEPUTY DEFENSE MINISTERS. DAWEE HAS A REPUTATION FOR LANDING ON HIS FEET DESPITE CHANGES OF REGIME. SANYA MAY HAVE GIVEN DAWEE THE DEFENSE PORTFOLIO IN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF HIS POSITION AS THE RANKING MILITARY OFFICER REMAINING IN THAILAND. IT STRIKES US A GOOD WAY TO GET HIM OUT OF HIS JOB AS ASSISTANT SUPREME COMMANDER, AND PAVES THE WAY FOR DOWNGRADING OR ABOLISHING THAT INSTITUTION. HE HAS LONG BEEN A CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF THE USG AND SHOULD DO A GREAT DEAL TO SMOOTH THE WAY FOR US IN TERMS OF THE ON-GOING ARRANGEMENTS FOR OUR MILITARY PRESENCE HERE. THAWIL IS A CARRYOVER IN THE SAME POSITION FROM THE LAST CABINET. SURAKIJ HAS
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PAGE 03 BANGKO 16205 01 OF 02 161711Z

BEEN CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ROYAL THAI ARMY UNTIL THE LATEST MILITARY PROMOTION LIST AT WHICH TIME HE BECAME CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE SUPREME COMMAND. HE HAS BEEN INTIMATELY INVOLVED IN COMMUNIST SUPPRESSION OPERATIONS COMMAND (CSOC) AFFAIRS AND IS ALSO A LONG AND CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF OURS. SURAKIJ HAS ALWAYS BEEN EXTREMELY CLOSE TO PRAPHAT, AND THOUGH THE DEPUTY DEFENSE MINISTER JOB IS LESS POWERFUL THAN THE ONE IN THE SUPREME COMMAND, HIS "PROMOTION" MAY BE INTENDED TO QUELL UNEASINESS AMONG PRAPHAT'S OLD SUPPORTERS. HE IS ALSO A CAPABLE

MILITARY MAN. THE REMOVAL OF THE FOUR TOP SUPREME COMMAND FIGURES (THANOM, PRAPHAT, DAWEE, AND SURAKIJ) ALSO POINTS TO THAT INSTITUTION'S POSSIBLE DEMISE.

3. MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. CHARUNPHAN ISSARANGKUN NA AYUTTHAYA IS FOREIGN MINISTER AND MAJ. GEN. CHARTCHAI CHUNHAWAN IS DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER. THIS SURPRISE TURNABOUT ELEVATES CHARUNPHAN FROM UNDER SECRETARY AND PLACES HIM OVER CHARTCHAI WHO, WHILE RETAINING THE SAME TITLE, WILL PROBABLY HAVE VASTLY LESS AUTHORITY AND LATITUDE IN THAI FOREIGN AFFAIRS THAN HE ENJOYED DURING THE PREVIOUS TEN MONTHS. CHARUNPHAN CAN PROBABLY BE EXPECTED TO CONDUCT THAI FOREIGN AFFAIRS MUCH THE WAY HE DID DURING THE NEC PERIOD FROM NOVEMBER 1971 TO DECEMBER 1972. THIS INVOLVED A REASONABLY CAUTIOUS STAFF APPROACH. IT WILL PROBABLY INVOLVE MUCH LESS OF THE KIND OF FLASHY FOREIGN POLICY INITIATIVES THAT CHARTCHAI GENERATED. HE MAY ALSO MODERATE OR BLUNT MUCH OF CHARTCHAI'S INFLUENCE OVER QUESTIONS RELATING TO US PRESENCE AND OUGHT IN SOME WAYS TO CAUSE US SOMEWHAT FEWER PROBLEMS.

4. INTERIOR MINISTRY. KOMOL WANNAPRAPA IS INTERIOR MINISTER, AND PUANG SUWANNARAT AND POL. LT. GEN. CHUMPHOL LOHACHALA ARE DEPUTY MINISTERS. KOMOL'S APPOINTMENT IS A SURPRISING AND POSSIBLY BRILLIANT STROKE WHICH MAY GO A LONG WAY TOWARD CHANGING THE IMAGE OF THE INTERIOR MINISTRY AS THE PERSONAL CREATION OF FIELD MARSHAL PRAPHAT, BELIEVED TO BE THE PERPETRATOR OF MUCH OF THE SOCIAL INJUSTICE FELT NATIONWIDE IN THAILAND. KOMOL IS A LONG-TIME JUDICIAL ASSOCIATE OF SANYA'S AND ENJOYS HIS COMPLETE CONFIDENCE

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SECRET

PAGE 04 BANGKO 16205 01 OF 02 161711Z

AND RESPECT. DURING HIS TERM AS MINISTER OF JUST
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PAGE 01 BANGKO 16205 02 OF 02 161711Z

51

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04

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SY-10 OPR-02 EB-11 AGR-20 SNM-02 COME-00 SSC-01 CU-04

OC-06 A-01 OMB-01 DRC-01 /200 W

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O P 161335Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 7465

INFO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 BANGKOK 16205

5. THE NEW JUSTICE MINISTER, PRAKORB HUTASINGH, IS A
FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE SUPREME COURT AND ANOTHER CLOSE
AND RESPECTED ASSOCIATE OXIJANYA, WHO RECENTLY BROUGHT

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 BANGKO 16205 02 OF 02 161711Z

HIM INTO THE THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY COUNCIL. DEPUTY
MINISTER SOMPHOB HOTRAKIT RETAINS THE SAME POSITION HE
HELD IN THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING CABINET.

6. OSOT KOSIN'S APPOINTMENT AS INDUSTRY MINISTER FOLLOWS
HIS POSITION AS DEPUTY COMMERCE MINISTER. HE IS A
WEATHY BUSINESSMAN WHO TENDS TO VIEW HIS HEAVY WORK
LOAD AS AN INTRUSION ON HIS LEISURE TIME. HE IS
PROBABLY NOT A STRONG ADMINISTRATOR. THE MISSION IS WELL
ACQUAINTED WITH HIM, AND HE HAS A REPUTATION FOR FRIEND-
LINESS TOWARD AMERICANS. SAARD HONGYONT CONTINUES FROM
THE OLD REGIME AS DEPUTY INDUSTRY MINISTER.

7. BOONMA WONGSAOXN, THE NEW FINANCE MINISTER, WAS
PREVIOUSLY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF
FINANCE UNTIL HIS RESIGNATION LAST AUGUST OVER A
DISAGREEMENT WITH HIS SUPERIORS, PROBABLY OVER THE BAHT
REVALUATION. HE IS CONSIDERED A MAN OF GREAT PERSONAL

INTEGRITY AND HONESTY, BUT IS BASICALLY A BUREAUCRAT UNLIKELY TO EXERCISE MUCH INITIATIVE. YUA SUSAYAN, DEPUTY FINANCE MINISTER, WAS FORMERLY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE (NOW BURNED OUT) REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

8. THE EDUCATION MINISTRY RETAINS THE SAME DISAPPOINTMENT LEADERSHIP WITH ABHAI CHANTRAVIMOL AS MINISTER AND BOONSOM MARTIN AS DEPUTY.

9. THE NEW MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATIVES, NOC. CHAKRABANDH PENSIRI CHAKRABANDHU, 62, IS THE RECTOR OF KASETSART AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY. HE IS WEAK ON ENFORCING HIS DECISIONS AND PRONE TO COMPROMISE. HIS DEPUTY, POL. GEN. PICHAI KULLAVANICH, IS A HOLDOVER FROM THE PREVIOUS CABINET.

10. THE NEW COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER, ADM. CHALIE SINHUSOPHON, MOVES UP FROM HIS POSITION AS DEPUTY COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER IN PREVIOUS CABINET. HE IS A GENIAL INDIVIDUAL, AND FRIENDLY TO AMERICANS, BUT NO WORLD-BEATER. POL. LT. GEN. PRACHUAB SUNTHARANGKUL'S APPOINTMENT AS DEPUTY COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER NO DOUBT REFLECTS IN PART HIS LONG YEARS IN CHARGE OF THE PORT

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SECRET

PAGE 03 BANGKO 16205 02 OF 02 161711Z

AUTHORITY. IT MAY ALSO REFLECT SANYA'S WISH TO RID THE THAI NATIONAL POLICE DEPARTMENT (TNPD) OF CLOSE PRAPHAT ASSOCIATES. UNLESS PRACHUAB RETAINS HIS JOB AS DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE, HIS NEW APPOINTMENT MAY ALSO DISLOCATE TEMPORARILY OUR CLOSE WORKING ASSOCIATION WITH THE POLICE ON NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION AFFAIRS. PRACHUAB HAS BEEN A HIGHLY CAPABLE POLICE OFFICIAL, AND WE WOULD BE SORRY TO SEE HIM LEAVE TNPD.

11. THE NEW COMMERCE MINISTER, CHARNCHAI LEETHAWORN, HAS BEEN DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE EXCISE DEPARTMENT AND WILL BE, AT THE AGE OF 42, THE YOUNGEST MEMBER OF THE CABINET. LIKE BOONMA, HE IS REGARDED AS HAVING STRONG PERSONAL PRINCIPLES. HE IS A CAPABLE, WELL TRAINED, DEDICATED CIVIL SERVANT. CHAROON SIBUNRUANG, THE NEW DEPUTY COMMERCE MINISTER, IS A VALUABLE, SELF-TAUGHT, OUT-SPOKEN, AND SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMAN WHO ONLY RECENTLY RETIRED FROM THE POSITION OF PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE. HE CONDUCTED ANNUALLY THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH TAIWAN AND JAPAN FOR THE SALE OF THAI CORN. ALTHOUGH HE IS PROBABLY 70 OR OLDER, AND FREQUENTLY REFERRED TO HIS AGE AND FEELING OF FATIGUE WHILE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (BOT), HE NEVERTHELESS HAS BEEN ACTIVE IN MANY BUSINESS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

AND HAS TENDED TO ASSOCIATE HIMSELF WITH THE THINKING

AND APPROACH OF THE MORE PROMISING MIDDLE LEVEL MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRACY.

12. UDOM POSAKRISNA, THE NEW PUBLIC HEALTH MINISTER, IS A DOCTOR AT SIRIRAJ HOSPITAL AND HAS JUST RECEIVED AN HONOR AWARD FROM THE WEST GERMAN GOVERNMENT. HIS DEPUTY, SEM PRINGPUANGKAEW, IS THE FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE WOMEN'S HOSPITAL IN BANGKOK.

13. AROON SORATHES, THE NEW MINISTER IN CHARGE OF STATE OWNED UNIVERSITIES, IS THE RECTOR OF CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY.

14. COMMENT: MANY OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT THIS CABINET IS INTENDED AS A CARETAKER GOVERNMENT FOR THE NEXT SIX

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SECRET

PAGE 04 BANGKO 16205 02 OF 02 161711Z

MONTHS OR SO UNTIL THE CONSTITUTION IS PROMULGATED AND ELECTIONS ARE HELD. MOST OF SANYA'S CHOICES ARE MEN OF UNIMPEACHABLE REPUTATION WHOM HE RESPECTS PERSONALLY AND CAN WORK WITH. MANY OF THEM PROBABLY DO NOT HAVE EXTENSIVE ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS, NOR THE IMAGINATION OR DRIVE NEEDED FOR THE LONG HAUL, BUT THEIR REPUTATIONS FOR HONESTY OUGHT TO BOLSTER THE GOVERNMENT'S SAGGING PUBLIC IMAGE AND CARRY THEM FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE.

15. THE CABINET IS MADE UP LARGELY OF FAIRLY COMPETENT CAREER TECHNICIANS, ALMOST ALL OF WHOM ARE FAMILIAR THROUGH THEIR PARTICIPATION IN PREVIOUS THAI GOVERNMENTS OVER PAST DECADE. THUS THEY REPRESENT CONTINUITY RATHER THAN CHANGE AND INCLUDE MANY OF OUR PAST CLOSE COLLABORATORS, MOST NOTABLY THE PERENNIAL MARSHAL DAWEE. WE ANTICIPATE NO SIGNIFICANT CHANGE, THEREFORE, IN RELATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT NOR ANY SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECT ON QUESTIONS OF INTEREST TO US. THE QUESTION REMAINS WHETHER THE STUDENTS WILL ACCEPT SUCH A CABINET BECAUSE OF ITS TRADITIONAL LOOK AND THE INCLUSION OF SEVERAL MILITARY FIGURES AND, IF THEY DON'T WISH TO, CAN THEY FORCE SOME MODIFICATION.

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